

FY 04 Monthly Highlights

Presquile and James Rivers National Wildlife Refuges

October 2003

ADMINISTRATION

Personnel-

Oct. 18th- Cyrus Brame entered on duty to serve as Outdoor Recreation Planner at EVRNWRC. His primary roll will be to work with the public and facilitate administrative and management needs at Presquile NWR, James River NWR, and Plum Tree Island NWR. Cyrus will work out of the complex's southern office located at the Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery in Charles City, VA. Cyrus is coming from John Heinz NWR at Tinicum (Philadelphia, PA) where he worked for five years.

Volunteer Program-

Ongoing since October 1st. – Volunteers assisted with cutting and removing downed trees within JRNWR in the aftermath of Hurricane Isabel. Numerous trees crossed trails, roads and fire lines. Maintenance Supervisor Vick orchestrated the clean-up effort.

November 2003

ADMINISTRATION

Volunteer Program-

November 6th- Maintenance Supervisor Vick and ORP Brame worked with four employees from A-1 Tree Service that signed up as volunteers for the day. A-1 Tree Service owner, Corbett "Ed" Harvey had offered to donate the equipment and labor after seeing the damage to the check station. The team cleared approximately twenty trees, removed three fallen trees from buildings and filled three truck loads of chips from storm-related brush. Vick and Brame made sure proper safety equipment was worn to insure a safe working environment for all participants. Long-time volunteer Thurman Pelter brought food and drinks for the workers. The five volunteers contributed a total of 33 hours of volunteer service. Photographs and a note of appreciation on FWS letterhead were sent to Mr. Harvey.

PUBLIC USE

General-

November 9th- John Coe, his wife and another member of the Richmond Audubon, Rex Springston of the Richmond Times Dispatch, and ORP Brame met at Shirley Plantation as part of a Audubon sponsored tour and bird walk on Presquile NWR. The group canoed/kayaked across a 500 yard section of the James River to access the island. The wind was 10 to 20 mph and the temperature was in the 40s at the time of the 9am departure. Once on the island high watermark debris was observed as remnants to Hurricane Isabel. A bald eagle nest was blown off a tree and dangling from vines in lower branches. In walking the 300 acre upland areas, some of the bulkhead showed damage from the storm, as did the maintenance shed (which lost zinc roofing sheets). All

other structures – the residence, visitor center, out buildings, and observation tower appeared in excellent condition. Wildlife appeared active and abundant: four deer, two field mice, northern harrier, kestrel, blue birds, grass hoppers, butterflies, etc.

Hunting-

November 15th, 17th, 18th, 21st, 22nd, and 29th - James River NWR employees conducted a management hunt in an effort to maintain healthy white-tailed deer populations. Two hundred and twenty-four hunters participated and 19 deer were checked-in at the Refuge.

Several permit infractions occurred as a result of a new regulation stating that doe must be taken prior to taking a buck. Janet Rider, FWS special agent from Richmond, VA was involved in the investigation to cite the appropriate parties.

Cooperating Associations-

November 19th - Refuge Manager, Joe McCauley, Biologist Sandy Spencer, and ORP Brame attended a land acquisition partnership meeting at the Nature Conservancy office in Tappahannock, VA. Updates were provided as to money availability and future acquisition plans along the Rappahannock River Valley.

December 2003 **ADMINISTRATION**

Personnel-

December 2nd - ORP Brame completed the Activity Based Employee Survey as requested by the Service.

December 10th - ORP Brame successfully completed the purchase card authority on-line test and submitted the certificate to NCTC and the Complex Headquarters for Refuge Manager, Joe McCauley's signature.

PUBLIC USE

General-

December 4th - ORP Brame completed website profile draft for James River NWR, Presquile NWR, and Plum Tree Island NWR. The draft was forwarded to Refuge Manager, Joe McCauley for review and submission to Ed Henry.

December 8th – Maintenance person Vick and ORP Brame visited several sites along the oxbow that may be suitable for water access to Presquile NWR.

December 11th - ORP Brame met with James River Association River Keeper, Chuck Frederickson to discuss access to Presquile NWR for Audubon's Christmas Bird Count.

December 12th - ORP Brame represented the Eastern Virginia Rivers NWR Complex at the Gloucester Ecological Services Office party. Brame networked and met with new counterparts.

December 18th - ORP Brame met with staff from the James River Association, Richmond Audubon, and the James River Park System to discuss the James River Days 2004 programs. The meeting took place at the James River Park System Visitor Center in Richmond. It was determined that the James River NWR and Presquile NWR would sponsor activities. James River Association, Education and Outreach Coordinator, Aaron Vaughan offered to run registration for those events. Advertisement for these and all James Rivers Days programs will be listed in a brochure and distributed in the spring.

December 18th - The Richmond Times Dispatch printed an article as a result of a November meeting with Richmond Audubon's John Coe and ORP Brame after a visit to Presquile NWR. Environmental Writer Rex Springston wrote the two-page piece. In response to the article, nineteen inquiries and offers to assist with the volunteer program were received.

Law Enforcement

December 19th - Maintenance man Vick and ORP Brame attended the FWS Law Enforcement office party in Richmond. The event provided the opportunity to network. ORP Brame in particular was able to discuss the Plum Tree Island NWR waterfowl hunt with several State Game Wardens and Don Patterson (Retired FWS agent). All were familiar with the problems that that Refuge encounters.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Fire Management-

December 22nd - Refuge Manager, Joe McCauley, Biologist Sandy Spencer, and ORP Brame met with Tim Craig, FWS Forester at Presquile NWR. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the development of a fire plan on the island. Tim suggested we divide the 300 acres into four sections and write the plan from there. Brame was offered the opportunity to write the plan with help Spencer. The plan is anticipated to be completed this winter.

Wilderness and Special Areas-

December 17th - Maintenance man Vick and ORP Brame with Michael Barber, USFS Archeologist to inspect areas of concern related to erosion caused by Hurricane Isabelle. Michael provided several recommendations for stabilizing the sites. See attached.

January 2004

ADMINISTRATION

Volunteer Program

January 6th - ORP Brame created an ACCESS program containing information for all the volunteers and people inquiring about the volunteer program at James River NWR and Presquile NWR. The database documents name, address, phone numbers, e-mails, and areas of volunteer interest. To date forty names are on the database. This program will help to access important information when the need arises to contact volunteers.

January 8th - ORP Brame met with retired navy cartographer Bob Johnson to discuss ways to assist with the Refuge's mapping programs. Mr. Johnson was surprised to find that the mapping technologies we use today is so advanced. He retired some ten years ago. Bob did mention that he would try to help the refuge if his services were need.

PUBLIC USE

General-

January 7th - ORP Brame, with the help of Ed Henry, completed final adjustments and updates to the Refuge Profile website for Presquile, James River, and Plum Tree Island NWRs. Brame now has access to update the sites when needed.

Interpretive Foot Trails-

January 2nd - ORP Brame led a group of eleven scouts along the Powell Creek trail. The group traveled from Hanover County, VA. to participate in the wildlife hike. Brame provided an overview of the Refuge and identified bird/tree species and how to recognize animal presence.

Hunting-

January 15th - ORP Brame met with Jim Hackett, a resident of Surry County, VA and member of local hunt club. Jim offered a proposal to conduct dog assisted deer hunts during the James River NWR management deer hunt. The well developed plan offered some attractive elements, but also some activities that do not fit within current management's preferred hunt guidelines. The meeting ended amicably. Brame has the proposal on file.

January 21st - Maintenance Man Vick and ORP Brame drove to the Rappahannock headquarters for the Annual Hunt Meeting with the rest of the staff. The meeting was productive in establishing permit conditions, scout and hunt dates, avenues for promotion.

Partnerships

January 15th - ORP Brame met with Dana Bradshaw, Center for Conservation Biology, College of William and Mary. They discussed Presquile NWR and the potential for placing Owl boxes on the refuge to mitigate loss of silos at nearby Curles Neck Marsh.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Communications Systems-

January 23rd - Maintenance Man Vick and ORP Brame worked to repair the James River NWR weather station. The battery had low voltage and was replaced.

February 2004

PLANNING

Compliance with Environmental and Cultural Resource Mandates-

February 13th - ORP Brame sent and hand delivered thirty-five copies of the Draft Version of the Presquile NWR Environmental Assessment for Fire Management Plan to appropriate governmental and non-governmental agencies, businesses, individuals, and libraries. The public will have a 30 day review period to which they can respond with comment. March 17th is the comment period deadline. Three local newspapers (Richmond Times Dispatch, Hopewell News, and the Progress Index) were fax, mailed, and e-mailed press releases noting such action.

ADMINISTRATION

Personnel-

February 20th - Maintenance worker Craig Owens transferred from Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel Maryland to begin work with the Eastern Virginia Rivers NWR Complex. ORP Brame will be his supervisor.

Volunteer Program

On-going: Contacts were collected and volunteers were informed of future programs and volunteer orientation.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Hunting

February 17th-18th: ORP Brame attended the National Conservation Training Center course, The Roll of Hunting in Wildlife Conservation and Management. The course covered the history of hunting and compatibility legislation as pertaining to the National Wildlife Refuge System. Brame noticed that only a small percentage (33%) of the attendees have hunted on a regular basis. These same non-hunters are in charge of establishing and running hunt programs. Brame received mixed reviews from experts regarding questions about regulated deer hunts with dogs on Refuges. Many questions also arose from inquiries about CFR annual listings for hunt programs.

PARTNERSHIPS

February 10: Upon the request of Midlothian Rotary Club member Bill Poveromo, ORP Brame conducted a Presquile National Wildlife Refuge PowerPoint presentation to a group of 80 Rotary Club members. The presentation took place at the Midlothian/Richmond Holiday Inn Select hotel. The response was positive and several members requested further information and opportunities to assist with the refuge.

February 12: ORP Brame met with Richmond Audubon's Past President, John Coe, and Director of Field Trips, Julie Kacmarcik to discuss events and activities planned for Presquile and James River NWR. After Brame's Powerpoint presentation and overview, Mr. Coe and Ms. Kacmarcik were very enthusiastic about helping the refuges financially and through in-kind donations. Pontoon tours, habitat enhancement, guided walks, and birding surveys were likely activities to be jointly conducted. Also suggested, was to contact Paul Bedell for using Presquile as a potential site for the Virginia BioBlitz.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Equipment Utilization and Replacement

February 25: Maintenance Man Vick, Volunteer, Micheal Vick and ORP Brame visited Presquile NWR to test equipment, evaluate project needs and take electricity meter readings. The group accessed the refuge via john boat because the cable ferry remained non-functioning. The backhoe needed a new battery and structural repair was required on the equipment shed.

OTHER ITEMS

Aviation Safety

February 19th: ORP Brame successfully completed B3 training (Combination Helicopter/Airplane Safety) at the Patuxent Research Refuge in Laurel, Maryland. The purpose of the training was to be prepared for potential air surveys over refuges.

March, 2004

PLANNING

Compliance with Environmental and Cultural Resource Mandates-

March 17th: The final day for public comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment for Presquile NWR Prescribed Burn Plan arrived with comments received from

Chesterfield County Fire and Safety, Dr. Blem of VA Commonwealth University, and a compilation from various State departments (Dept. of Environmental Quality, Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries, Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, Dept. of Historic Resources, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, Charles City County, Chesterfield County, Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Dept., and Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services). Minor explanations and revising was required for many of the comments. The Dept. of Historic Resources, however, required a "Cultural Landscape Survey" which will definitely cause the project to be delayed from a early spring burn to a fall burn (if approved). Plans are currently in development to obtain resources to conduct the "Survey". Once completed the Environmental Assessment will be finalized and the Fire Management Plan and the Prescribed Burn Plan will be forwarded to the Fire officer for review.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Fire Management-

March 3rd: Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery supervisor Odom and Maintenance Man Darlington met with USFWS Fire Officer Craig and ORP Brame to discuss future development of a fire plan at the Hatchery. The 400 acre fish hatchery has large stands of forest and drained rearing ponds that require occasional burning in the late winter. Sandy Spencer, EVRNWRC Biologist had offered, via e-mail communication, to help develop the fire plan. Brame offered to assist the hatchery where necessary.

March 9th: SCEP student Rebekah Packet and ORP Brame conducted a vegetation survey on Presquile NWR. In following the vegetation survey guidelines, provided by Biologist Spencer, Packet and Brame collected information on grasses and forbs along thirty meter transects. The four randomly selected transects all fell within the open fields of the proposed prescribed burn unit. The purpose of the study is provide baseline data which will be compared to post-burn vegetation data collected along the same transects.

March 16th: Through the coordination of EVRNWRC Manager McCauley and Fire Management Specialist, Gerald Vickers, sixteen employees from various state and federal departments joined to view a demonstration of the Gyrotrak at James River NWR. The Gyrotrak is a low-impact cutting machine, which can reduce a ten-inch diameter tree into mulch with relative ease. The purpose of the demonstration was to show fire management personnel and State and Federal archeologist that fuel reduction can be achieved with little or no impact on the soil. The integrity of the land is left unscathed for potential future archeological investigations. After the demonstration key members of the group met in Prince George to resolve problems with the development of the James River NWR Fire Management Plan. After some clarification on terms and equipment, Ethel ? and Joanna Wilson of the VA Dept. of Historic Resources and Shelly Hight and John Wilson of USFWS Cultural Resources concurred with Steve Hubnard, fire officer, and McCauley regarding low impact of fuel removal in the loblolly plantations. Once standard operation procedures are agreed upon, the draft James River NWR Fire Management Plan can proceed.

ADMINISTRATION

Personnel

March 22nd-26th: Manager McCauley, Assistant Manager Owens, Biologist Spencer, and ORP Brame met with Region 5 Biologist and Managers as part of the “Connecting Refuges to the Greater Conservation Community and Regional Landscape” meeting at the National Conservation Training Center.

Volunteer Program

March 23rd: Ten volunteers participated in a chainsaw operators course, sponsored by the EVRNWRC and the Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery. As policy requires, only FWS trained personnel can operate chainsaws. The classroom portion took place in the EVRNWRC’s Southern division office at Harrison Lake, VA. Hatchery maintenance man Ed Darlington taught the course with assistance from other regional experts. Maintenance man Luther Vick helped coordinate the successful event.

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Computer Systems-

March 17th: The US District Court once again ordered a shutdown of the Internet connectivity for the FWS to isolate and protect any vulnerable Individual Indian Trust data in DOI information systems. No Internet use is allowed except for e-mails within the Service.

March 24th: Internet access is restored to FWS, but may be shut down again in the coming days.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife Diversity-

March 30th and 31st: Manager McCauley, Biologist Spencer, and ORP Brame attended the Virginia All-bird Conservation Workshop in Richmond. Over 100 scientists, conservation professionals, land managers, and other conservation advocates met to review current information and focus on future direction and collaboration. The VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies sponsored the event. The USFWS’s region 5 and Washington office was highly involved. Excellent contacts were made as a result of attendance.

April, 2004

ADMINISTRATION

Volunteers-

April 3rd: ORP Brame conducted a volunteer orientation on Presquile NWR for fourteen participants. The four hour event included a brief overview of the Fish and Wildlife

Service, the Refuge, and volunteer opportunities. A tour and lunch was also provided. Lastly, the group signed volunteer agreements and assisted with a refuge beautification project.

April 16th: ORP Brame worked with seven volunteers on various projects at Presquile NWR, including maintenance shed roof repair, removal of field fences, and blue bird box inventory.

April 24th: ORP Brame worked with four volunteers in removal of a quarter mile of barbed wire fencing at Presquile NWR.

PUBLIC USE

General-

April 1st: The newly-acquired 28-foot pontoon boat was tested in Harrison Lake by Maintenance Mechanic Vick, ORP Brame and two volunteers. The boat was found to maneuver well. However it's length caused some difficulty in launching and docking. Connecting the boat back on the trailer was somewhat time consuming. Most of the concerns were merely due to the unfamiliarity of the operators to the craft. Several safety features will need to be added prior to taking the public out on trips.

Interpretive Foot Trail-

April 24th: In conjunction with the James River Association's James River Days, the James River NWR offered an Earth Day nature walk. ORP Brame led the group of six participants along the Powell Creek

EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Rehabilitation-

April 2nd: Maintenance Mechanic Vick and several volunteers helped to complete repairs to the Turkey Island Cable Ferry to make it operational once again. The 700 foot cable was replaced and other adjustments made. The ferry had not functioned in over six months. Although the ferry is not for use by the general public, the ferry is instrumental in transporting equipment and materials to the island as well as staff and volunteers.

April 20th: Mike Haden FWS RO obtained site elevations for the proposed boat dock on the western side of Presquile NWR.

PARTNERSHIPS

April 6th: ORP Brame again attended the Poquoson Museum general meeting as an individual and not as a representative of the Service.

April 7th: ORP Brame met with Chris Lewis, education director for the Virginia Living Museum in Hampton. The meeting included a discussion regarding partnership opportunities. The two decided perhaps the best chance to work together would be with the Museums Safari Program visiting some of the area refuges. Brame also offered

presentations and outreach education programs to support Museum events. Ms. Lewis provide Brame with a tour of the newly opened Museum.

WILDLIFE

Endangered and/or Threatened Species

April 19th: Biologist Spencer, Maintenance Mechanic Vick, and ORP Brame conducted the year's first American Bald Eagle survey at James River NWR. Spencer provided Brame protocol and advice for initiation of the transect count along the James River and Powells Creek. Brame will conduct the surveys through the end of the summer.

April 29th: ORP Brame and Maintenance Mechanic Vick conducted the bi-monthly bald eagle survey. Thirty-one eagles and eight osprey were observed.

PLANNING

Research and Investigation-

April 20th and ongoing: David Tribble, graduate student at Virginia Tech University was provided a special use permit to Presquile NWR, as requested, to perform research which will aid in the development of a model capable of predicting wetland locations. David accessed the island via kayak and conducts sampling of various random points in an effort to field verify predictions based on GIS, remote sensing, and available digital data. David orchestrated site visits with ORP Brame.

May, 2004

ADMINISTRATION

Safety-

May 4th-May 7th: ORP Brame and MM Owens attended the Motorboat Operators Certification Course (MOCC) in Annapolis, Maryland. The course was a comprehensive study of watercraft operation utilizing classroom and hands-on learning.

May 28th: ORP Brame met with Glenn Mullins of the Coast Guard Auxiliary for a Vessel Safety Check. The inspection evaluated safety issues and deficiencies of the 28 foot pontoon boat. Mr. Mullins provided suggestions, such as having a copy of the registration and other documents on the boat; and have one additional fire extinguisher on board.

PUBLIC USE

Interpretive Foot Trails/Tour Routes-

May 8th: ORP Brame coordinated a group of eleven participants from the Midlothian Rotary Club during a visit to Presquile NWR. The group was the first to enjoy a trip to the Island via the new pontoon boat. Everyone was required to complete a release form

and wear a type I personal floatation device prior to boarding the 28-foot vessel. Maintenance Mechanic Vick operated the craft from the shore of Bermuda Hundred to the western side of Turkey Island. The group was briefly toured around the refuge and then allowed to journey on their own.

May 15th: Refuge Manager McCauley and ORP Brame led a pontoon trip and island sojourn to Presquile NWR. The activity was part of the James River Association's James River Days. The Richmond Audubon Society was also a non-participating supporter. Nine people pre-registered and gathered at the Hopewell Marina boat ramp at 7 AM. The morning event included a short hike on the island, a visit to the Visitor Contact Station, and shore clean-up. Upon arrival to the island, the group was greeted by the calls of a wild turkey. The day ended with a pontoon trip around the entire 1,300 acre refuge. Approximately five bald eagles were sighted, along with countless osprey. When trailing the boat at the end of the day, left pontoon received a puncture in the fiberglass. Repair work will be done in Tappahannock.

Interpretive Exhibits/Demonstrations-

May 26th and 27th: In support of local farm communities, the Refuge served as a participating sponsor to the Hanover County Ag Days. ORP Brame provide 20 presentations on reptiles during the two-day event. Over 1,300 third graders traveled from throughout the county to enjoy the outdoors, eat fresh ice cream and learn about farming and our natural resources. Diane Wheeler, organizer of the event from Colonial Farm Credit was very please with our support and has invited the Service back next year.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Pest Control-

May 12th: Maintenance Mechanic Vick and ORP Brame brought over 50 gallons of Glypro and Surfactant, along with a new water pump, to Presquile. The purchased items will be utilized to reduce johnsongrass and Canada thistle as part of a major effort to improve grassland habitat on 250 acres of the island. Unfortunately, the well which we had hoped to obtain sufficient water was too shallow. The other wells on the property were deeper but needed major renovation to be functional. It was decided to bring water in from outside sources (the James River Refuge well), via the cable ferry. Although time consuming the clarity of the water would not disrupt the chemical reactions to the agents involved. River water was said to have too much sediment.

May 18th, ongoing through May: Herbicide began being sprayed in the open fields of Presquile NWR by Maintenance Mechanic Vick, as part of invasive species control measures.

WILDLIFE

Endangered and Threatened Species-

May 17th: ORP Brame and Maintenance Mechanic Vick conducted the bi-monthly bald eagle survey. Thirty-five eagles and nine osprey were observed.

Other Migratory Birds/Other Resident Wildlife-

May 22nd: Volunteer Finton Day began doing breeding bird point counts within the James River NWR.

PARTNERSHIPS

May 17th: Anne Wright, environmental educator at VA Commonwealth University and ORP Brame met to discuss partnerships and conduct site visits to VCU's Rice Center and USFWS's James River and Presquile NWRs. It was determined to have two groups from VCU's summer program visit the James River Refuge and the Presquile Refuge in June. Basic water sampling and flora fauna inventories will be coupled with refuge beautification projects during their visits.

May 18th: SCEP employee and College of William and Mary graduate student, Rebekah Packet joined ORP Brame in collecting donated items from the newly renovated VA Living Museum. Curator George Matthews generously gave the refuge complex two terrariums, two aquariums, and several mounted pictures of wildlife. George voiced his hope that the Service would be able to continue to supply rehabilitated animals to their Museum. Brame offered to advertise, throughout the region, George's need for otters, opossum, and screech owls.

PLANNING

Research and Investigations-

May 24th-26th: US Forest Service Archeologist, Micheal Barber began studying an exposed shell midden along Powells Creek in an area called the Hatch Site (a state registered cultural historic site). The investigation proved to be less than expected. The midden was shallower than anticipated. A full report is forthcoming by the end of June.

June, 2004

D. PLANNING

Compliance with Environmental and Cultural Resource Mandates-

June 17th- Victoria Barr, cultural resources assistant for the FWS Northeast Region came to the Refuge to look at the Hatch shell midden and become familiar with the James River NWR archeological sites.

E. ADMINISTRATION

Volunteer Program-

June 8th- ORP Brame conducted a volunteer day at James River NWR. Several basic maintenance tasks were completed by the small number of participants.

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Pest Control-

June 1st, 2nd, 9th- ORP Brame and MM Vick sprayed Glypro on areas of the upland field on Presquile NWR for the purposes to reduce aggressive behavior of the Johnson grass and Canada thistle.

G. WILDLIFE

Threatened and/or Endangered Species-

June 4th- ORP Brame and MM Vick conducted the bimonthly Eagle survey along a transect of the James River and Powell's Creek. Twenty-two eagles and eleven osprey were seen during the survey.

June 18th- ORP Brame and MM Vick conducted the bimonthly Eagle survey along a transect of the James River and Powell's Creek. Twenty-four eagles and five osprey were seen during the survey.

H. PUBLIC USE

Fishing-

June 5th- ORP Brame, MM Vick and several James River NWR volunteers aided the staff of the Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery and the FWS Richmond Division of Law Enforcement during the annual Pathways to Fishing event. Over 70 children participated in the event. ORP Brame helped bait, and remove caught fish from the lines of the young anglers. A hotdog lunch was provided and prizes distributed.

Interpretive Tour Routes-

June 12th- Scouts from local troop visited Presquile NWR to observe wildlife and hike the trails. ORP Brame led the group of eight and led environmental education activities.

Outdoor Classrooms- Students-

June 23rd- ORP Brame and MM Vick lead a group of 12 Summer Discovery students from VCU Community Outreach Program in activities at James River NWR. Anne Wright and Ed ?? from VCU helped orchestrate the event. The group participated in a reptile presentation by Brame and conducted water quality tests, as well as a stream clean-up. The group of students collected over 300 lbs of trash.

June 28th- ORP Brame and MM Vick lead a group of 12 Summer Discovery students from VCU Community Outreach Program in activities at Presquile NWR. Anne Wright and Ed ?? from VCU helped orchestrate the event. Water quality inspections and wildlife observation were the primary reasons for the trip.

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

New Construction-

June 15th- ORP Brame met with Paul Smith of Harbor Dock and Dredge to discuss the \$25,000 dredge and dock construction project at Presquile NWR. Mr. Smith reviewed the site and felt confident the project would come in at or under budget. He accepted the job. No other contractors responded to our request for estimates.

Rehabilitation-

June 15th- Lumber for the ferry landing project was delivered to the ferry landing from Lowe's Company.

PARTNERSHIPS

June 10th- ORP Brame met with Anne Wright from VCU to discuss the possibilities of involving the Earthwatch Institute in Protonotary Warbler work at Presquile NWR once Dr. Blem retires. This preliminary meeting showed an interest was there, but action would not take place until a later meeting with Dr. Blem himself.

July, 2004

E. ADMINISTRATION

Personnel- July 5-17th-ORP Brame took annual leave to visit the area he helped protect during his time in the Peace Corps... the Bilsa Biological Reserve. Located in the remote mountains of Northwest Ecuador, Brame reconnected with the rainforest creatures and local staff now managing the 7,000 acre property.

Volunteer Program-

July 2nd- Volunteer letters mailed to all James River and Presquile NWR volunteers for an upcoming work day on July 27th.

July 27th- Seven volunteers aided ORP Brame in clearing trails along the James River NWR. A total of 21 hours of work was donated.

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Rehabilitation-

July 20th- ORP Brame met with Mr. Mitchell from Mitchell Well Inspection Company at Presquile NWR. Mr. Mitchell inspected the problem with the burnt out pump stuck in the well. He said he had no equipment that could make it across on the cable ferry. He suggested banging the stuck pump to the bottom of the well.

G. WILDLIFE

Threatened and/or Endangered Species-

July 3rd- ORP Brame and MM Darlington (from Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery) conducted the bimonthly Eagle survey along a transect of the James River and Powell's Creek. Thirty eagles and three osprey were seen during the survey.

July 30th- ORP Brame and MM Vick conducted the bimonthly Eagle survey along a transect of the James River and Powell's Creek. Twenty-six eagles and five osprey were seen during the survey.

J. OTHER ITEMS

Partnerships-

July 28th- Mgr. McCauley and ORP Brame presented the County of Chesterfield with the annual revenue sharing check at the monthly Board of Supervisors meeting. The board was very receptive to our progress at Presquile NWR.

July 29th- Mgr. McCauley and ORP Brame helped orchestrated a meeting involving eleven different environmental organizations. The purpose of the meeting was to inquire if interest was sufficient to pursue plans to learn more about the proposed sale of Curls Neck Farm (5,500 acres adjacent to Presquile NWR). The groups including the Audubon Society, The Trust for Public Lands, The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, Delta Waterfowl, and several more. The response from the group was, yes, the area is worth of protection. The James River Association took the lead in investigating the habitat features. TNC and the TPL would investigate the particulars of a purchase.

August, 2004

D. PLANNING

Public Participation-

August 10: ORP Brame presented the Prince George County Board of Supervisors with the annual FWS Revenue Sharing Check as a result of the location of the James River NWR. The supervisors, after hearing a short briefing about the year's happenings at the Refuge, requested that the development of a public boat ramp on Refuge property be investigated. The board was also interested having turkey hunting made available on the Refuge.

Research and Investigation-

August 23: ORP Brame and MM Vick met with Rick Busch and Glen Askins of the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss logistics for the proposed deer sampling survey. The survey is to evaluate the health of the deer population on Presquile NWR.

E. ADMINISTRATION

Volunteer Program-

August 14: Six volunteers assisted with landscaping projects at James River NWR. The group contributed 18 volunteer hours.

August 17: Six volunteers assisted in clearing trails at James River NWR. The group contributed 18 volunteer hours.

August 28: Thirteen volunteers participated in the FWS Volunteer Picnic and Pontoon Boat Tour at Presquile NWR. Volunteers walked the trails, observed wildlife and helped collect debris. Lunch was prepared by volunteer, Thurman Pelter.

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Fire Management-

August 30-31: ORP Brame helped to develop the Presquile NWR Fire Management Plan.

Pest Control-

August 31: ORP Brame moved 20 cartons of Glyphosate from James River NWR to the Hazardous Materials building at Presquile NWR.

G. WILDLIFE

Threatened and/or Endangered Species-

August 31: ORP Brame and MM Vick conducted the bimonthly Eagle survey along a transect of the James River and Powell's Creek. Twenty-one eagles and eight osprey were seen during the survey.

H. PUBLIC USE

Hunting-

August 11-13: White-tailed deer hunt information was prepared and distributed for the upcoming Fall hunts at James River NWR and Presquile NWR.

September, 2004

D. PLANNING

Research and Investigation-

September 2: ORP Brame and MM Vick assisted Bob Duncan, Brian Moyer, Rick Busch, and Glen Askins of the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries with harvesting six deer (two yearling bucks and four adult females) for the purposes of evaluating overall health of the Presquile NWR deer population. The effort took place at night and required approximately four hours. Results (received in mid November) indicated a high parasite burden and highlights an overpopulation of deer. The results also encouraged population thinning. The reintroduction, after a three year absence, of the Presquile deer hunt will take place in November. Results of the sampling was forwarded by Brame to Refuge Biologist Sandy Spencer.

E. ADMINISTRATION

Safety-

September 15: Safety Inspection at James River NWR.

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Fire Management-

September 8-12: ORP Brame participated in the Interagency Fire Management Training in Bedford, VA. Brame successfully received certification in the S-130 and S-190 training.

Pest Control-

September 12: Presquile NWR was aerially sprayed by helicopter with Glyphosate. The purpose of the spray was to reduce invasive plant species (Canada Thistle and Johnsongrass). Approximately 250 acres were sprayed.

H. PUBLIC USE

Interpretive Tour Routes-

September 20-22: ORP Brame and MM Vick led a group of introductory biology students from the College of William and Mary on a tour around and on Presquile NWR. During the three day event, thirty-nine participants observed 19 bald eagles and over 36 species.

Hunting-

September 5-12: Scout dates for the James River NWR archery deer hunt.

September 22: ORP Brame sent Refuge Archery Hunt Permits to approved applicants.

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Other-

September 23: ORP Brame took 2004 Ford F-150 to Richmond for installation of a spray-in body liner.

J. OTHER ITEMS

Cooperative Programs-

September 28: ORP Brame met with the Friends of Chesterfield Waterfront and discuss possible partnerships.

Training and Items of Interest-

September 13: ORP Brame successfully completed the Government Purchase Card training on-line.

PROPOSED ATTACHEMENTS

-BALD EAGLE SURVEYS

-DEER HUNT DATA